What can you do as a student to help the environment? Plenty!

School

1. To save paper, print documents double-sided. Ask your instructor about accepting assignments electronically or printed in duplex. If they are unresponsive, try asking the department head.
2. Do your homework on campus! When you study in public spaces like the library where the computers and lights are already on, less energy is used than if you study in your dorm or apartment. You'll also be less likely to get distracted.
3. Use a laptop or refillable binders with loose-leaf paper for notes instead of notebooks. You never fill up all the pages in those notebooks anyway.

Clothes

4. For your next fashion fix, check out Bloomington's great used clothing retailers. Plato's Closet, the second floor of Cactus Flower, Goodwill, the Salvation Army, Amused Clothing, A.Z. Vintage, Vintage Vogue by GW, and Opportunity House all have great deals to check out.
5. Clean the dryer's lint trap before and after each load of clothes. With the dryer working more efficiently you won't have to pay to run the cycle twice to get your clothes dry, and you'll be saving energy to boot.
6. Also consider skipping the dryer altogether and using a clothes drying rack instead. You'll save money and your clothes will wear out less quickly. Heat and agitation wears down the fiber of clothing. Where do you think that dryer lint come from?
7. Organize a free clothing swap party for you and your friends.

Food

8. Bring reusable bags with you to the C-store or grocery store to avoid using disposables. If you're making a small purchase, you may not even need a bag at all!
9. Invest in a reusable water bottle and fill it for free at water fountains.
10. Buy delicious local food at Bloomingfoods, the Bloomington Community Farmers' Market, and the Bloomington Winter Farmers Market.
11. Before buying packaged foods, consider whether the packaging can be recycled.
12. To save on packaging and money, buy in bulk. Arrange to split oversized purchases with a friend.
13. Ask your favorite restaurant's manager to replace Styrofoam take-out boxes with more eco-friendly options.

Other

14. Ask your landlord if they maintain your lawn using use chemical fertilizers or pesticides. If so, ask them to switch to non-toxic products.
15. If you can't walk, bike, or take the bus somewhere, carpool! If you're driving home on a break and post an ad in the IU classifieds, you can even have passengers help you pay for gas.
16. Get informed! Read up on environmental issues and take classes related to sustainability.
17. Join one of IU's environmental student groups or check out the many volunteer opportunities in the Bloomington Community. The City of Bloomington Volunteer Network (bloomington.in.gov/volunteer/) is a great place to start. Apply to environmental commissioner vacancies in the City of Bloomington.
18. Dispose of belongings responsibly. If you move out of town over the summer, don't just throw away your unwanted appliances or furniture. Donate them to the IU Office of Sustainability's Hoosier-to-Hoosier sale to be resold and raise money for charity.
19. Finally, respect the classics: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. Whether it's recycling your dead batteries or using a power strip and turning off your computer each night before bed, small actions really add up!